THE FUND FOR THE ENDOWMENT OF THE EPISCOPATE WHY IT IS NEEDED AND HOW IT CAME INTO BEING

A. DIOCESE AND PARISH

1. Let us first discuss Diocese and Parish, because the Fund has a close relation to both.

Because for 150 years, all of our Colonial existence, we had no bishops, and because for many years after we obtained them, they had at their disposal no diocesan funds with which to work, we tend to think of the parish as the foundation of the Church.

Actually the diocese and not the parish is the foundation. This is so for two good reasons. First, the diocese is simply the area under the rule of a bishop, and the bishop is the successor of the Apostles and the principal representative and leader of the Church. Second, parishes did not develop until about 350 at the earliest, and much later in some areas. Christianity was preached first in the cities. In each city there was a bishop, to whom the city and its outlying area were subject. The only place of worship was the Bishop's church in the city. There the clergy and laity gathered each Sunday for the Eucharist. As the rural areas slowly were Christianized, and the Christian population of the cities grew, additional churches were built. At first these were served by clergy assigned temporarily by the bishop. Later the assignments became permanent and at that time parishes began their existence.

2. Such in brief is the origin of the parish. The importance for us is the close relation between the bishop, and the clergy and laity of the parish. These were very much under the direction and care of the bishop by frequent visitations and by semi-annual clergy conferences. The bishop had at his disposal, originally, all revenues in the diocese, from whatever source derived. Out of these he allotted sums for the support of the clergy, the maintenance of church buildings, and

the care of the dependent. He could do things because he had the money with which to do them and the ecclesiastical right. Gradually the parish became more independent of the bishop because it acquired property of its own. But the power of the bishop and the revenues at his command were still large.

3. In American dioceses, organized long after parishes had come into existence and with no diocesan revenues, the bishop at first had no funds with which to do anything. In fact the early bishops supported themselves by serving as rector of some parish, and gave to the diocese their left-over time. In most American dioceses today the bishop still has no independent diocesan revenues; he has to work with whatever the parishes grant him. He can teach and preach, visit, ordain and confirm, but has scanty means for developing such important diocesan work as recruiting for the ministry, Christian education or social service. The parishes have the expense of supporting him as well as their own clergy and their own plant, and therefore cannot spare much for other diocesan purposes. The importance of the Fund for the Episcopate is, that if it can provide an endowment income large enough to pay the salaries of its bishops in full, it will not only make episcopal support secure and permanent but free parish funds to that extent for contributions to the work of the diocese. If in addition to providing fully for the support of the bishops it can provide also for diocesan administration, great possibilities lie ahead. As to episcopal security, were we to experience another serious depression or a war, we might not be able to support three bishops, or even two, for our endowment income now provides less than the salary, and much less than the salary and expenses, of one bishop. There have been times in the history of the diocese when two bishops were badly needed but there was money enough for only one.

4. In this diocese, with its limited endowment, we have no conception, because no experience, of

what can be done if episcopal revenues are sufficient. At present the diocese cannot do much for the parishes and missions, their clergy and people. It ought to be a great power-house, from which new ideas and methods in all fields are constantly put at their disposal. It ought to be an effective link between the National Church and the parishes. It ought to be showing the way in all directions. These statements cannot be further elaborated here but it requires little imagination to perceive their truth.

B. ORIGIN OF THE FUND FOR THE ENDOWMENT OF THE EPISCOPATE

1. The Fund came into existence in 1809 with payment of the first instalment of a bequest by Andrew Doz of Philadelphia. Bishop White and Diocesan Convention saw the importance of the idea represented by the legacy and at once established a fund which for many years was called the Episcopal Fund and is now officially the Fund for the Endowment of the Episcopate. Notwithstanding earnest pleas by the far-sighted William White and his successors, the Fund grew very slowly, simply because it was no one's special business to increase it. Much of the increase up to 1943 was due to T. Ewing Miller, treasurer of the Fund and of the Diocese from 1899 to 1920, who persuaded Convention to allow him to add to the principal of the Fund any annual excess of the assessments for Episcopal and Convention expense over actual needs. No attention was paid to obtaining bequests, and there were few of these. Bishop Alonzo Potter, though he had a large family, left the Fund $500, and there was a bequest of about $5,000 realized in 1850, from Frederick Kohne, (an important benefactor of the General Theological Seminary), one of $500 in 1853 from Susan B. Brown, and one of about $15,000 realized in 1918 and 1927, from the estate of Penelope Shepard. Still the Fund totalled only some $92,000 when The Church Foundation became trustee of it in 1939.

2. In 1942-43 Mr. Lowber Stokes was instrumental in establishing a permanent committee on the Fund. In 1944 Mr. Clarence M. Brown became chairman of this Committee. He saw at once the necessity of a permanent organization and provided funds for employment of an efficient secretary, office expense, and advertising. Under his leadership the Committee, with splendid assistance from Bishop Hart, has succeeded in making its purposes known and a number of intended bequests has been communicated to it. At the end of 1949 the capital of the Fund had increased to some $220,000.00, or more than double the 1939 figure, merely through the gifts of interested persons, without realization as yet of any bequests.

3. So here we are today, with the permanent organization suitable to the accomplishment of an important task, and, we believe, knowledge, derived from experience, of the best manner of performing it. The purpose of the Committee is simply to acquaint the clergy and laity of the diocese with the nature and usefulness of the Fund so that those who understand may respond with bequests or gifts.

4. We have no campaign and no solicitors. We work with the parishes for the joint benefit of parish and diocese. We use articles in The Church News, clippings sent out for inclusion in parish leaflets, pamphlets for distribution to parish mailing lists, a brief History of The Fund, and an illustrated brochure. All of these are available on request to the office of the Committee in Church House.

With a very little assistance from clergy and laity we can be hopeful of accomplishing great things.

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